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**Facsimile Transmittal:**

<b>To:</b> Christa Dean	<b>From:</b> Michael Hermes
<b>Fax:</b> 1-202-565-9000	<b>Date:</b> August 25, 2005
<b>Phone:</b> 1-202-565-1606	<b>Pages:</b> 4
<b>Re:</b> STB order AB-547X	<b>CC:</b>

☐ Urgent    ☐ For Review    ☐ Please Comment    ☒ Please Reply    ☐ Please Recycle

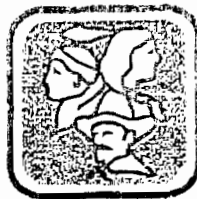
**Hello Christa,**

Attached is the June 16th letter from SHPO you requested. If you need any additional information please let me know. My office number is (970) 963-9012 and my email address is [Mhermes@rfta.com](mailto:Mhermes@rfta.com). I will be in touch soon

**Best regards,**

**Michael Hermes**  
**Director of Properties and Trails**  
**Roaring Fork Transportation Authority**

Roaring Fork Transportation Authority  
 51 Service Center Drive  
 Aspen, Colorado 81611



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COLORADO  
HISTORICAL  
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The Colorado History Museum 1300 Broadway Denver, Colorado 80203-2137

16 June 2005

Brad Beckham  
Program Manager  
Colorado Department of Transportation  
Environmental Programs Branch  
4201 East Arkansas Ave.  
Denver, CO 80222

RE: Rio Grande Trail Project, Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad Aspen Branch,  
Eagle, Garfield, and Pitkin Counties

Dear Mr. Beckham:

Thank you for your recent correspondence dated 16 June 2005, concerning the proposed conversion of the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad's Aspen Branch to a bicycle trail. Our office has reviewed the submitted materials. In March of 2005 your office proposed removing the existing railroad ties and tracks and widening the existing grade to accommodate a 10-foot trail, a 3-foot jogging path, and two 1-foot "safety shoulders." At 17 feet, the resulting path would have been nearly twice as wide as the current grade. Our concern at that time was that the wide, finished grade would look more like an old county road and not a historic rail corridor.

We have reviewed your response to our concerns, as presented in "Alternative #3" in your letter dated 16 June 2005. This alternative proposes the elimination of the 3-foot jogging trail, allowing the finished trail to be 12 feet wide. The current railroad bed is approximately 9 to 11 feet wide. We feel that this alternative will best preserve the existing railroad grade; in that it will remain recognizable to future generations as such.

CDOT proposes the removal of all existing railroad ties and tracks. Although this is unfortunate, we feel that this portion of the project will not adversely effect the historic railroad. This determination is based upon previous projects in which railroad lines have been abandoned or dismantled. In cases such as this, the line remains eligible for the National Register if the

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OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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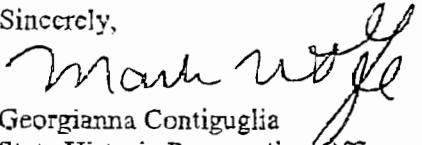
Rio Grande Trail Project, Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad Aspen Branch, Eagle, Garfield, and Pitkin Counties

remaining railroad grade remains intact.

Therefore, we find that Alternative #3 will have no adverse effect on the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad's Aspen Branch.

If you have any questions, please contact Joseph Saldibar, Architectural Services Coordinator, at (303) 866-3741. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

for   
Georgianna Contiguglia  
State Historic Preservation Officer, and  
President, Colorado Historical Society